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necessarily short may be made as strong as a longer one by making it louder or higher; or a syllable necessarily of small intensity may be strengthened by lengthening it or raising its pitch. Thus, the short *i* of *With* in Line 3 is strong on account of its high pitch and large amplitude; and the weak *e* of *arrow* in Line 3 is strong on account of its high pitch and its length. This might be called the *principle of substitution*.

An increase in the loudness, length, or pitch of a syllable renders it stronger—other things being equal. Using the symbol *f* to indicate dependence, we may put  $m=f(x, y, z)$ , where *m* is the measure of strength and *x*, *y*, and *z* are the measures of intensity, length, and pitch respectively. This might be called the fundamental *principle of strength*.

The study of this and other specimens of verse has made it quite clear that the usual concept of the nature of a poetical foot is erroneous in at least one respect. *Lines* in verse are generally distinct units, separated by pauses and having definite limits. A single line, however, is not made up of smaller units that can be marked off from each other. It would be quite erroneous to divide the first stanza of *Cock Robin* into feet as follow:

Who killed|Cock Robin?  
I, said the|sparrow,  
With my bow and ar|row  
I killed|Cock Rob|in.

No such divisions occur in the actually spoken sounds, and no dividing points can be assigned in the tracing.

The correct concept of the English poetical line seems to be that of a certain quantity of speech-sound distributed so as to produce an effect equivalent to that of a certain number of points of emphasis at definite intervals. The proper scansion of the above stanza would be:

Who killed Cock Robin?  
I, said the sparrow,  
With my bow and arrow  
I killed Cock Robin.

The location of a point of emphasis is determined by the strength of the neighboring sounds. It is like the centroid of a system of forces, or the center of gravity of a body, in being the point at which we can consider all the forces to be concentrated and yet have the same effect. The point of emphasis may lie even in some weak sound or in a mute consonant, if the distribution of the neighboring sounds produces an effect equivalent to a strong sound occurring at that point. Thus the first point of emphasis in the third line lies somewhere in the group of sounds *mybow*, probably between *y* and *o*.

With this view of the nature of English

verse all the stanzas of *Cock Robin* can be readily and naturally scanned as composed of two-beat or two-point lines.

It is not denied that much English verse shows the influence of quantitative classical models, but such an influence is evidently not present in *Cock Robin*."

It is evident that a wide perspective is opened up by these initial studies, and that students of English verse will do well to heed their significance. The results will of course vary with the mode of recitation, so that the personal equation can by no means be eliminated at the outset; and the same will probably be true in some measure of the interpretation of the tracings.

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### FRENCH LITERATURE.

*Molière's Les Précieuses Ridicules*, by WALTER DALLUM TOY. Heath's Modern Language Series. Boston (Boards).

*Molière's Les Précieuses Ridicules*, by C. FONTAINE, B.L., L.D. Wm. R. Jenkins. New York (paper).

*Les Précieuses Ridicules* is especially serviceable for class use. To begin with, it is short (forty pages) and the narrative is lively while the comedy has a threefold historic interest in that (1) it is the great classic forerunner of French farce comedy; (2) it marks Molière's successful début in Paris; (3) it is a record (albeit in ridicule, and for this it is not the less valuable) of a curious phase of French literature not easily brought to the notice of the undergraduate in any other form.

Mr. Toy has apparently understood the unusual significance of the piece and accordingly divides his excellent introduction (ten pp.) into I, Molière; II, La Société Précieuse; III, Date and reception of the comedy; IV, Bibliographical note; V, Molière's preface.

Under these four sections the editor gives the historical setting of the play in brief and entertaining form.

His notes (ten pp.) are mainly historic, although they contain some suggestive linguistic points. They include the celebrated *Carte de Tendre*, in itself an amusing and instructive

commentary on precious methods and affections.

Mr. Fontaine's edition, if we rightly understand him, is intended to reach a younger class of students. This we conclude from the large amount of translation contained in the notes (fifteen pp.), and consists frequently of an English so simple that the distorted exaggeration of the *Précieuse* phrasing seems often lost to the detriment of the humor of the piece. Otherwise his notes are well adapted to be of literary value to instructor and class. Mr. Fontaine has, however, chosen to disregard the historical setting of the piece which I deem so important. He includes Voltaire's "Notice sur les *Précieuses Ridicules*" and Molière's own dubious preface without comment however.

He has but two pages of introductory matter that is his own—and that rather informal—containing the following statement which is surely misleading to undergraduates, to say the least: "Mascarille is the *faithful image* (the italics are mine) of the young courtiers that filled the court of Louis XIV."

The statement seems to me unrelieved by anything in the context, yet I hardly think Mr. Fontaine would seriously maintain that the rowdy Mascarille (dressed for a buffoon part, originally even to the wearing of a mask—by the author himself—and still an extravagant drôle in the modified latter-day performances of the *Comédie Française*) could be the *faithful image* of any sane man save through grossest caricature.

Assuming this second edition to be adapted for younger students, we can readily understand the omission of Mascarille's famous, line "Je vais vous montrer une furieuse pluie," with the indicated gesture which is indeed hopelessly vulgar for any age. Yet Mr. Fontaine must have sacrificed unwillingly so valuable an historical side-light.

Both editions would be decidedly more serviceable for the addition of a vocabulary. This convenience has been, I believe, frequently advocated in these pages but seldom with more justice than now. The "*Précieuses*" abounds in words distorted from their natural to special *Précieuse* meanings, some words and phrases having been coined expressly for

the *Société*, and used exclusively by them. These meanings are subtle and difficult for any but a specialist to reach. Mr. Fontaine has aimed at this in his notes in a greater degree than Mr. Toy.

Both books are well printed and are attractive in form and size.

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

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### THE INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES,

SIRS:—The "International Correspondence" has now, in the four years of its existence, made great progress in England, France and Germany, and, to some extent, in the United States. Mr. W. T. Stead, Editor of the *Review of Reviews*, in London, has offered one hundred prizes, consisting of books in the languages foreign to the recipients, to be awarded to those students who have made the greatest proficiency in this part of their modern language study. Thirty of these go to each of the European countries most engaged in the correspondence; England, France and Germany, and ten come to the United States. If each teacher, in school or college where the International Correspondence has been introduced, will send to our committee the name of the student considered "the most deserving as regards continuance in regular, careful correspondence, and general character" as soon as possible, we shall be glad to give such student an opportunity to compete for one of the ten American prizes.

The teacher should, in each case, state the reasons on which he bases his conclusion, and send also *two* specimens of letters written by the student in the foreign language, without direct assistance of his instructor.

*The competition will close February 1st, 1901, but may be extended two weeks.*